Vital TIMES

Official Newsletter of Vital Options® - Support For Young Adults With Cancer
Issue No. 7 / Spring 1991

LIZA joins the Dance For Life®

Photos and story on page 3

A letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As we have entered the Spring of '91, I would like to take this chance to thank you for your ongoing supportive efforts, and most recently, for your participation in the Sixth Annual Dance For Life. Mark your calendars now for the Seventh Annual Dance For Life which will take place on November 16, 1991, at Royce Hall.

As you can see from the upcoming Women's Fundraising Division's Vital Spirit Award Dinner honoring Jill Eikenberry, our fundraising efforts are maintaining an active momentum. But it has become progressively more difficult to raise the monies we need because of the current economic burdens which many are now facing. Still, Vital Options is keeping its commitment to young adults with cancer and even to a growing number of young adults that have found their way to us who have diabetes.

We are facing a situation in our regional programs whereby we are in need of developing individual and community support in Long Beach, the San Gabriel Valley, Orange County, and San Francisco. If you are able to introduce Vital Options to a friend, colleague or family member who would be able to assist our growth and development in those areas, please contact me directly at Vital

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V.O. WOMEN'S FUND - RAISING DIVISION HONORS ACTRESS JILL EIKENBERRY

Jill Eikenberry, talented actress of stage, film, and television, will be honored at the Second Annual Vital Spirit Award Dinner. The event will be held in the Grand Ballroom of the Beverly Hilton, Sunday, April 28.

Ms. Eikenberry is perhaps best known for her portrayal of Ann Kelsey in NBC's "L.A. Law," in which she co-stars with her husband Michael Tucker. Her outstanding performance has earned her three Emmy nominations and a Golden Globe award.

Ms. Eikenberry recently hosted and co-produced the Emmy-nominated "Destined to Live," NBC's documentary which dealt with the emotional aspects of breast cancer, from diagnosis to recovery.

Last year's Vital Spirit Award recipient, Linda Otto, will present the award designed by Nini Policappelli. Meryl Streep officiates the event as Mistress of Ceremonies. Other participants include guest speakers Brandon Tartikoff and Henry Winkler. Additionally, Steven Bochco, Warren Littlefield, and Michael Tucker will participate, with entertainment by Holly Near. This evening is presented by the Vital Options Women's Fundraising Division, and is chaired by Linda Otto.

VITAL NEWS

A Feat of Fleet Feet

Nearly a thousand runners, walkers, and wheelchair competitors hit the streets last fall for the Third Annual Studio City 5K/ 10K run, according to Sondra Frolich, Executive Director of the Studio City Chamber of Commerce.

Despite a computer breakdown, participants enjoyed the day, the course, and the chance to benefit Vital Options.

To those of you who didn't make it this time, be sure to circle Sunday, October 13 on your calendar - that's the date of the Fourth Annual Studio City 5K/ 10K run!

Survivors Speak Out

Advocacy was the theme that emerged during the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship's fifth annual meeting, held November in Washington. For details on upcoming Survivors Day activities focusing on access to health insurance, see enclosed letter.

The NCCS is looking forward to Denver in November, where the Sixth Annual Assembly will explore "Cancer Survivorship in Action: Activating and Advocating." For further information, write: NCCS, 323 Eighth St., SW, Albuquerque, NM 87102.

Chaos at Ciro's

"Connoiseur of Chaos" was the title of a fashion entertainment event recently held at Ciro's Restaurant in Los Angeles. The evening included entertainment, a fashion show, and a sale and auction to benefit Vital Options. Thanks go to Maria Hoyt and Tom Polson, who created "Chaos."

48 Hours

A crew from CBS News' "48 Hours" briefly descended on Vital Options last month as they taped footage for an upcoming episode titled "Beating Breast Cancer." The segment, produced by Brian O'Keefe and reported by Linda Tiara, focuses on the role of support groups in recovery from cancer and long-term survival. Watch for it May 1 at 10 p.m.

Kick For Life '91

A Kickathon will be held June 15 from 12 - 3 p.m. at the YMCA Sports Center in Laguna Niguel, CA. Participating Karate students of all ages will have 1 hour to do as many Karate kicks as possible. Sponsors will be asked to pledge per kick. If you are interested in sponsoring a student (in support of V.O.!), please contact the event directors, Mike Mata or Joe Moscatelli, at (714) 662-1840.

Climb Every Mountain

"On May 9-12, I am going to attempt to climb Mt. Whitney - the highest mountain in the continental U.S. I want to climb it with another Vital Options participant who has conquered cancer. We will be leaving Thursday afternoon. Please contact me at (213) 432-4819. Ask for Todd Aiken." Editor's note: Todd's hope is to be the first young adult cancer survivor to climb the world's seven highest summits, to promote greater awareness that cancer is a treatable, often curable disease, and to raise funds for Vital Options. If you are aware of anyone that can sponsor Todd's efforts, please contact the office.

Thanks, thanks, thanks

...to Howard Richman for presenting a Sound Portrait Concert to benefit V.O., and to David Weiderman and the Guitar Center for their special attention to a participant's needs.

VITAL PEOPLE- Corey Gonzales

(continued from page 5)

Mr. Gonzales was diagnosed in his first year of graduate school after a checkup his college baseball coach insisted on. "My family was incredible. Everybody... my parents, brothers and sisters." But he never heard from the coach again. The blow of losing an athletic career was considerably softened when Mr. Gonzales fell in love with his first class in psychotherapy.

"People have asked me how I can spend all my time working with cancer patients. The fact is it's the most rewarding work I can imagine. We're like brothers and sisters...colleagues in the process. We make room for a wide range of intense reactions to cancer...perfectly normal reactions."

In addition to private counseling, Mr. Gonzales runs groups for patients' "significant others" as well as working with newly diagnosed cancer patients at a local law enforcement agency.

In Memory of...

Denise Michielle Esseff
Julie Farkas
Joe Gilbride
Hope Ginsberg
Jade Gold
Diane Copes Mehau
Lori Penick
Lynda Schenkel
Dahlia Soffer
Bridget Sorkin
Betty Reifman
Valerie Tooley
Barbara Firestone